

България в творбите на ФЕЛИКС КАНИЩ



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Felix Kanitz - Friend of Bulgaria

Hungarian painter, journalist and explorer Felix Kanitz devotes his life to studying the life of the Balkan peoples and especially the Bulgarian, of whom wrote their capital composition 'Danube Bulgaria and the Balkan'. In the early 60s of the XIX century Kanitz wrote for the Bulgarians: 'In Europe, they think the Bulgarians are lazy, backward and lost people. But I, for my greatest amazement, I found a people in densely populated towns and villages, urban residents who are engaged in various special crafts. As in a one city are made only pavti /belts/ and knives; in other are made only metal works, pottery and carving, in others - tight linen fabrics, rugs, braids, etc. Even then the famous explorer and adventurer prophesies that "future industrial nation in the Balkans" will be the Bulgarians.

Captured by the beautiful Bulgarian nature Felix Kanitz has left us virtuoso drawings and enchanting landscape mostly from the northern regions of Bulgaria.

Philip Emmanuel Felix Kanitz was born on August 2, 1829 in the old part of the Hungarian capital, in large families of Hungarian merchant. As a child manifests a passion for painting and dreamed of becoming an artist, but because of innate musicality, his parents insist to study violin. Classmate is famous Hungarian violinist Joachim Ludwig. And yet the love of painting prevailed. In 1842 at age 13 he graduated from Arts School and enrolled as an engraver-improver for Vince Grimm, in whose Institute he worked four years. Formed as a capable artist, Felix Kanitz shows a certain interest in science. In 1847 he moved to Vienna, where he remained until the end of his life. For long years he is a journalist and associate of the "Illustration Zeitung" at Leipzig. This enables him to travel widely across Europe and especially in the Balkan countries, among which it draws him most to Bulgaria. Found with astonishment how little was known about these European countries Kanitz study and publicize information that shall focus on culture and lifestyle of the Balkan peoples.

In 1860 he comes to Bulgaria, and few years later it turns to be chief object of his travels and studies in archaeological, historical and geographical, ethnographic and cartographic terms. Along with his scientific pursuits in a series of articles in good faith and objectively he acquaints the Western society with the life of Bulgarians in their struggle for national liberation. In the period from 1862 to 1874 Kanitz travel several times in Bulgaria. He crosses the Balkans 18 times and despite the difficulties of any kind, made wide historical, archaeological, ethnographic and cartographic studies. Fruit of his tireless research is the remarkable work "Danube Bulgaria and the Balkan", released in 1878 in Leipzig, illustrated by himself. The book causes deep interest in

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Bulgaria and abroad; it receive ample assessment and recognition in our country. With arguments and research Kanitz acquainted Europe with the creative capacity of the Bulgarian people, whom portends a bright future. He also produced an accurate map of Bulgaria which at that time included all her ethnic areas - Moesia, Thrace and Macedonia. Kanitz follow with sympathy the national struggles of Bulgarians and remains a loyal friend of Bulgaria after its liberation from Ottoman rule to the very death of 22 December 1903.

The artist-engraver draw not only numerous pencil sketches in his works; Felix Kanitz left a substantial collection of watercolors with magnificent views of the Bulgarian cities and localities which reveal the true exciting beauty of the Bulgarian nature. His nephew Jacques Kanitz years ago gave the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences most of the archives of the researcher with a collection of drawings and watercolors. Some of these watercolors are presented to the Bulgarian public.

Hristo Markov















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